

Mr. Jim Anderson
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1/3/87

Dear Jim,

I hope your mother recovers well. I've been alert to the potential seriousness of falls to older people for years, since my maternal grandmother, who'd survived the pogroms and flights from them fell one night when she was about your mother's age and broke a hip. She never recovered from that. Several years ago my family doctor warned me that I'm in what he called the broken-hip age, in addition to the special problems I have in falling from the anticoagulation. And every time Lil's mother, 97, visits us, I'm apprehensive. She's in fine shape but I do worry about her falling. Her visit today will preclude what I'd planned. I've finally decided that my copies of all the Wick-Epstein business must be in the ~~most recent~~ unfiled stack atop the subject-file file cabinets and I was going to bring them up and alphabetize them for filing. Hopefully, this would disclose them all.

I say this because of your formulation, which I may misunderstand, that "Hoover wanted to clear the FBI name and found the best way to do it was to write a letter for Sid Epstein's signature." This is not inaccurate but I think also it may indicate you did not recover all the relevant records.

It all began with LBJ's desire to have Hoover write a book supporting the official account of the JFK assassination. He sent Abe Fortas over the negotiate Hoover's acceptance. Fortas didn't like the idea and neither did the FBI. It is thus not Hoover's idea, is LBJ's, and the modification of LBJ's idea evolved as the FBI mulled it all over. I'm not now sure who came up with the final scheme but I think it was Wick. I'm reminded of what used to both amuse and please me - when people ranging from George Gardner to Quin Shea when he headed DJ's FOIA appeals office used to almost proclaim, ~~Wick~~ "why you're defending the FBI." I've always been extremely careful not to be unfair to it and on occasion I have defended it from the nutty and unfair allegations by the Mark Xanes and others like him. My point is that in the formulation of your letter the idea was Hoover's but it really wasn't.

I'm glad you were able to get together with Lenar. He's a fine guy and will want to help you all he can but he stays tied up in too much and often can't do what he'd like to do. Fact is I'm surprised he located what he did locate as soon as he did. That's why I suggested phoning Wrons. I'd sent Dave all the relevant records stapled together and if he found one he'd find them all.

While I'm inclined to believe that you'll be better off not getting into the substance of the FBI's JFK assassination investigation, if you say much about the autopsy and the FBI I can provide some pretty dramatic stuff, including FBI pictures, on its errors in that area. They might attract some attention when your book is out.

I don't recall whether I gave you copies of Oswald's service record. You may want it because it fails to show his security clearances and all those associations with CIA projects are listed merely as "maneuvers." It is in the Commission's published volumes, I think 16 or 17. Maybe Jim could get Carmen to make copies for you. They'd probably be better than the copies we can make.

Hope your work goes well and that you do get up here soon.

Best wishes,

Harold

I did locate a memo to Jim, without any documents attached, that can indicate whether you retrieved all those about which I wrote him. I enclose it. I'm sure there is another with the records attached. But on second thought I'll make a copy to be sure.

I also enclose an FBI copy of a letter I wrote to obtain a copy of the Epstein release I could use in facsimile reproduction. Look at what they go through on a request for a press release! Which they deny.

What they say in paraphrasing the records they dug up about me is not false. However, it becomes less than honest with its omissions and anglings. They seem to pep themselves up with this kind of internal propagandizing. My letter was written 10 days after FOIA became effective.

The "original" filing, appropriate for information requests, is in a subversive file on me.

If you consult Oswald's service record and get the dates of those maneuvers I'm sure they'll coincide with the dates of the efforts to overthrow Sukarno. I believe the second was Strongback.

If you saw at Jim's all the Epstein/Wick records I refer to or don't want any more than you have, please let me know so I won't be searching for the others when I can again.